

Comments for the National Advisory Committee Meeting 11-8-2019

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To: Enid Santanaortiz(CENSUS/ADDC FED) <Enid.Santanaortiz@census.gov>; Census National Advisory Committee (CENSUS) <census.national.advisory.committee@census.gov>

Good morning.

My name is Kim Keating and I am writing from ZERO TO THREE, a national nonprofit nonpartisan organization whose mission is to ensure that all babies and toddlers have a strong start in life. For almost 40 years, ZERO TO THREE has translated the science of early childhood development into useful knowledge and strategies for parents, practitioners, and policymakers. We are pleased to be a member of the leadership team of the Count All Kids Committee, the national complete count committee for young children. We appreciate this opportunity to offer comments addressing the young child undercount in the Census.

The Census is a crucial data source for our organization's work, but more importantly, it is a crucial tool for the allocation and availability of essential resources for very young children and their families across the country. However, as the Committee is aware, infants and toddlers are the most undercounted age group, with *as many 2 million missed in the 2010 Census*, and the undercount is particularly high among low-income families in hard to reach communities, and particularly young children of color. Therefore, ZERO TO THREE is pleased that the Census Bureau has engaged in a number of activities, such as convening the September 2019 *Early Childhood 2020 Census Summit* in Denver, Colorado, to specifically address the undercount of young children in the time remaining before the April 1, 2020 Count.

I am writing today to ask that the Census Bureau convene Early Childhood 2020 Census Summits in all of its regions as soon as possible.

The recently held Denver *Early Childhood 2020 Census Summit* provided a valuable opportunity for early childhood advocates and practitioners from eleven Western states and two tribal nations to exchange ideas and strategies for improving the count of young children, share their outreach materials, and hear from Census Bureau representatives. In the course of the two-day summit, participants gained insights on specific steps being taken at national, regional, state and community levels that can inform their own efforts to ensure a complete count, such as information shared by the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau's Denver Regional Office, Cathy Lacy on the Bureau's work to ensure 2020 Census enumerators are educated about causes contributing to past undercounts, expand knowledge about the census among early childhood educators and in schools, and recruit and hire census workers who are members of the communities and speak the language of the households that will be contacting

The potential for broader and continuing benefit from additional *Early Childhood Summits* is reflected in the response of a participant in the Denver meeting, who expressed, "This was a tremendous benefit to connect with people in [my] region and share ideas." As a result of the meeting, a regional complete count committee for youth nonprofits is being formed, in which he will be engaged. Given the short time remaining until the Census is conducted, the additional summits will need to be scheduled quickly in order for others in the field to benefit. The Count All Kids Committee stands ready to help organize these summits.

In closing, I would like to thank the Committee for your efforts to ensure that young children are fully counted in the 2020 Census. We appreciate this opportunity to offer comments and look forward to hearing more in the months ahead about the Census Bureau's strategies to ensure a complete count.

Respectfully,
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